

ARIZONA GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION COUNCIL
(AGIC)

The next Board meeting will be held in PHOENIX on Thursday, January 5, 1995.

CALL TO ORDER - The Executive Management Board of the Arizona Geographic Information Council (AGIC) met on **Thursday, November 3, 1994** in Building B, Room 202 (Wyoming room) at the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) National Training Center, located at 9828 North 31st Avenue, in Phoenix. Following a tour of the facility, the meeting was called to order at 1:50 p.m. by Chris English, the new President of AGIC's Executive Management Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - An opportunity was given for discussion of minutes from the September 1 meeting. After a brief period of silence, Seth Franzman moved that the minutes be approved as written. Diana Barnes Freshwater seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET - Lynn Larson indicated that the budget summaries being distributed were in the usual format. She pointed out that both Gene Trobia and Gary Irish were authorized to attend the annual meeting of the National States Geographic Information Council. AGIC paid Gene Trobia's expenses, and the State Land Department paid Gary Irish's way.

Once again Board members were made aware that \$100 membership assessments for the new year would soon be sent out. As in the past, members representing State agencies will receive interagency agreements, and everyone else will receive invoices for subscriptions to the AGIC Newsletter.

STRATEGIC PLAN - Mr. English delegated responsibility for the Strategic Planning Committee and subcommittees to Gene Trobia, the Board's new Vice President. After verifying that there were no new major developments with respect to overall progress, Mr. Trobia proceeded with the individual subcommittee reports.

Administrative & Legal - Lynn Larson said one of the Administrative and Legal subcommittee's primary tasks, obtaining approval of funding for the State Cartographer's Office, looks very hopeful. A three-person staff has been recommended. If approved, funding for at least one position could be available as early as July 1 of 1995.

The subcommittee also requested the Board's authorization to proceed with an effort to gain Legislative approval of a proposal to help fund data development. The law within Arizona already allows cost recovery; so the subcommittee proposes marketing donated GIS products through a partnership arrangement to generate revenue to be used for data development. The State Land Department's Resource Analysis Division (RAD) revolving account, of which AGIC's accounts are subsets, is already being used for map sales and training activities for the Arizona Land Resource Information System (ALRIS). Through a legislative change, the subcommittee hopes to broaden the scope of the account to include data development.

The subcommittee does not envision AGIC's competing with the private sector but feels products could be developed that would be of sufficient interest to generate funds for data development. Using a partnership approach would circumvent the need for AGIC to hire its own staff to support sales activities, like Arizona Highways Magazine does. However, because it has not been established in statute, the Council must route its finances through a State agency. Funds for both ALRIS and the State Cartographer, which are also statewide GIS functions, are being handled through the Resource Analysis Division (RAD) revolving account at Arizona State Land Department (ASLD). Therefore, the RAD revolving account has been suggested as a logical location for collection and distribution of funds associated with this potential new program.

Don McTaggart expressed concern that students might have to pay for data once the new program is in place. Rick Trapp, however, pointed out that commercial and private rates usually differ substantially. While rates for corporate use with intent to resell are typically quite high, private users are generally permitted to purchase data at or near cost. It was also noted that, although organizations like Wide World of Maps often enhance and copyright any data they acquire, copyright violations can usually be avoided by going back to the raw data instead of using the enhanced versions.

The State Legislature is expected to be in session from January through May or early June. Bills can not be introduced without official sponsors, and each legislator and committee is allowed to sponsor only a certain number of bills. The two individuals who have sponsored GIS-related bills in the past will not be returning next year; so other support must be recruited. Concept papers are due by November 15. The actual proposed legislation is not required until sometime after the first of the year. Consequently, Ms. Larson confirmed that, if the Board authorized the subcommittee to proceed, review copies of the draft legislation could be given out, and a final vote could be taken at the Board's January meeting, prior to submission. Sally Lanier moved in favor of supporting the subcommittee's development of the proposed legislation. The motion was seconded by Wayne Hood and passed unanimously.

Data Resources - Gary Irish indicated that the Data Resources subcommittee was still working on instructions for the thematic working groups. He said the Land Parcels group had met the day before but that more local and federal representation is needed to tackle the technical work and intercoordination required for this particular data theme. The Geodetic Control group has been meeting as well and is developing the first draft of its plan. Mr. Irish estimated that their draft might be finished next May and will be forwarded to the Data Resources subcommittee shortly thereafter. Meanwhile, the Hydrography group has been working on Reach File 3 data for the state. Under the contract that was initiated to help with this project, about 80 to 85 percent of the fixes were completed for the data set. Mr. Irish indicated that a coordinated effort needs to be made to get the Transportation

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group up and running.

Education - Chris English said the Education subcommittee had been meeting with the Information Exchange subcommittee on the GIS/LIS conference. The group is considering meeting remotely and having everyone participate, perhaps through teleconferencing or video conferencing.

Information Exchange - Sally Lanier said some information would be reported as part of the GIS/LIS conference report. She did, however, indicate that the GIS calendars turned out very well and were given to attendees at the conference. Ms. Lanier requested feedback on a handout that was prepared by Bill O'Sullivan-Kachel, of the ALRIS program, with the assistance of his wife, Peggy, who has a background in local government and is currently a member of the Governor's Office of Planning and Budgeting. Bill and Peggy prepared the list as a potential guideline for distribution of calendars throughout the state but asked for input to ensure that the calendars reach as many potential GIS users as possible.

Several thoughts were shared. Diana Barnes Freshwater suggested putting an item in the AGIC Newsletter about the calendars. Placing a copy on each legislator's desk was also suggested, but the idea was dismissed when Lynn Larson explained that the act would constitute a legal violation. Joan Laurence and Linda Strock obtained confirmation that every effort would be made to deliver calendars to appropriate individuals within each organization and that Bill O'Sullivan-Kachel would appreciate recommendations of individuals to serve as distribution points within agencies. Others asked how many people already had calendars. Sally Lanier responded that a precise count would be difficult to determine. Registration figures were not yet available. However, anyone who paid the full registration fee should have received a copy. In addition, those who participated in the project were given copies to distribute, and some people purchased copies. Gene Trobia mentioned that calendars had already been passed around through the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) as well.

Ms. Lanier noted that the price structure for the calendars was intentionally designed to encourage bulk sales and avoid creating an administrative nightmare. She asked that any other questions, comments, or concerns be directed either to her, at (602) 789-3609, or to Bill O'Sullivan-Kachel, at (602) 542-4061.

Technology - Chris English indicated that he had not been able to reach Ben Froehlich. He had hoped that Mr. Froehlich would be available to provide an update on the State's communication activities. No one responded with any additional input.

Before moving on to the next agenda item, Mr. English requested that everyone introduce themselves. During the process, Dwight Curtiss announced that the U.S. Soil Conservation Service is now called the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and Jonathan White indicated that Ed Sloat is no longer with Arizona's Department of Education. Mr. White said he will be filling in for the agency until a new representative is appointed.

NSGIC - Gary Irish explained that, as Arizona's official entity for statewide coordination of GIS development and implementation, AGIC is a member of the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC). The annual meeting of this council of councils provides an excellent opportunity for representatives to get to know each other and exchange ideas. Approximately 150 people, including Gary Irish and Gene Trobia, attended the 1994 NSGIC meeting, in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. As usual, there were several workshops offered, some simultaneously; so Mr. Irish and Mr. Trobia split up to cover as many sessions as possible.

One of the sessions in which Mr. Irish participated dealt with the role of GIS in the proposed National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). To create a large data sharing structure such as NSDI, there would need to be technology to help in actual data sharing. The federal Spatial Data Transfer Standards (SDTS) will help to resolve some issues, but the batch file process still presents some difficulties. One consortium has proposed implementing a public-domain software specification, to be known as the Open Geodata Interoperability Specification (OpenGIS). OpenGIS incorporates an Application Programming Interface (API), through which agencies who institute cooperative arrangements could, conceivably, share or view each other's data over a network and actually see transformations happening live during each transaction. Mr. Irish pointed out, on the back of a handout, a list of several entities supporting the OpenGIS effort. The list includes some federal agencies as well as universities and private organizations. The U.S. Army is one of the biggest proponents. It is anticipated that the movement will gradually gain momentum and that any necessary technology will, someday, be developed.

Mr. Irish invited Gene Trobia and Steve Wing to comment on the national parcel data base and coordinates adjustments that were discussed in another session he attended. Mr. Trobia responded that he was quite impressed with what the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is doing. The BLM has "tons" of manual data to deal with and is working through the Public Land Survey system. As part of its process for sharing information, the BLM is taking different levels of control and increasing the accuracy of data at each scale. Coordinate geometry is being used, but Mr. Trobia said it was unclear whether prior changes are being taken into account. He also said he wonders, as the points become more and more accurate, how well the BLM data will mesh with other data. Anyone interested in reviewing, on behalf of AGIC, a 3½-inch draft of standards for the system was asked to contact Mr. Trobia, at (602) 740-8113. Steve Wing indicated that the BLM hopes to complete most of its refinements sometime in the 1997/1998 time frame and has already finished most of its data for Arizona. He said new surveys are usually reasonably accurate, but old ones still need to be verified.

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Advances in digital orthophotographic technology since its inception, 25 years ago, were also highlighted. One recent change involves an airborne Global Positioning System (GPS) utilizing satellites in contact with ground communication points. The current geodetic controls are only temporary, and there are still some technological problems. The cost of doing this kind of work is, however, decreasing. Bids for one project in Puerto Rico decreased from around \$395,000 to only \$18,000 in a relatively short time. Coverages for some states (e.g., Utah, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Delaware, and Vermont) are being funded partially, if not entirely, by the states themselves. Additional assistance is available through cost sharing with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). For anyone interested in pursuing this option, however, a long-term perspective is recommended. Although the funds are available, the USGS has approved only seven firms to perform the work under its cost sharing program, causing some fairly significant delays.

Other sessions included an update on the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) plan for building partnerships with state and local governments. *[Copies of the plan were distributed and discussed during the July AGIC Board meeting, in Flagstaff. Anyone who did not receive a copy may contact Marian Arnold, at (602) 542-4061, to obtain one.]* Mr. Irish explained that the federal government must prepare for the year 2000 census but does not have money to map the entire country. Therefore, the plan is to try to use local data and encourage cooperative funding of data development. The Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names (ASBGHN) will be relying more heavily on local data as well. Dale Steele said the ASBGHN recently decided to discontinue its practice of sending out field crews when maps are revised.

The overall plan proposed by the FGDC includes the concept of having a spatial data clearinghouse, utilizing federal metadata standards. Mr. Irish noted that some grant money is available to aid in this effort and suggested that the State Cartographer's Office, once funded, might be an appropriate focal point for such activities in Arizona. Having reminded the Board that a metadata interface must be in place by January 1995 in order to comply with the Executive Order, Mike McDonald, of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, was assured that the software had been received and installed. Mr. McDonald also mentioned an excellent conference being held in Washington, D.C. next May and suggested that AGIC consider sending someone.

In closing, Mr. Irish noted that the federal vending program has a limit of \$25,000. He also said he found it interesting that, in the mock trials on access to GIS data, different verdicts were often reached in very similar cases, the same trend that Gene Trobia said he had observed at other conferences where similar mock trials were held. Mr. Trobia added that the NSGIC is looking for a site for its 1996 meeting. Chris English asked who is normally invited to the meetings and was advised that the Council is expanding. Each state council is invited to send one voting representative, but there are also associate members. Wisconsin chose to send seven people to this year's meeting to try to "set an example."

GIS/LIS - Having been involved in GIS/LIS conference preparations on behalf of the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM), which is one of the founding organizations for GIS/LIS, Mike McDonald shared some feedback on the GIS/LIS conference before leaving the Board meeting. He said organizers were quite pleased with the turnout. There were only six vacant vendor booths, and total attendance was estimated at over 3,500. The local portion was particularly well received. Mr. McDonald extended special recognition to those who suggested putting all 28 exhibits and demonstrations in one place instead of offering separate technical tours. This arrangement not only offered a broader array but was much more convenient for attendees. In addition, he said this year's conference would be remembered for its social event at the Desert Botanical Gardens. Even the president commented favorably on the event.

Sally Lanier echoed these sentiments, saying Steve Wing, Steve Augustin, Don McTaggart, Gary Irish, Michael Collins, and other local participants in the conference planning process deserve a great deal of credit. She said several favorable remarks were made in her presence, especially regarding the panels, calendars, and other local offerings. Having been asked to provide numerical data on the conference, Ms. Lanier reported that, as of the latest count available prior to the Board meeting, 178 registrants had checked the AGIC membership box. The Council is to receive 20 percent, but the actual dollar amount will depend on the levels of registration. Based on this count and an estimated average of \$25 per person, AGIC would receive a total of \$4,400. Ms. Lanier reminded everyone that AGIC has already set aside, from 1993 conference proceeds, some seed money that is not reflected in its budget summary. Proceeds from the GIS/LIS conference could be designated as a supplement to help cover costs for future conferences.

Don McTaggart expressed appreciation for the CAD Institute and others involved in the volunteer program for the conference. Final figures were not yet available from Mike Schmandt, but Dr. McTaggart estimated that there were approximately 60 to 70 volunteers altogether. Seth Franzman shared a discovery that vendors do not necessarily expect to make many sales during these events. One vendor indicated that his main reason for participating was just to talk to people and keep his organization's name in front of the public. Mr. Franzman also noted that people at the conference seemed very upbeat and glad to be there. Joan Laurence commended Sally Lanier for her contribution to the effort. The Board demonstrated its concurrence by applauding, and Chris English commented on the inordinate amount of work involved.

CONFERENCE ON LAW AND INFORMATION POLICY FOR SPATIAL DATABASES - Lynn Larson distributed copies of the agenda that was used for the Conference on Law and Information Policy for Spatial Databases, which was held at Arizona State University on Friday and Saturday, October 28 and 29. She suggested that anyone interested in any of the topics listed contact her, at (602) 542-4621, if they would like additional information. Highlights of the conference included those that

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follow.

Opinions on accessing governmental spatial information vary greatly. While the British government recovers 72 percent of its costs, for example, our federal government promotes sharing. Within the United States, Kentucky and Alabama allow cost recovery under some circumstances, but Florida believes even commercial use provisions are unconstitutional. Other states have taken a different approach and have exempted GIS data from their open records laws. According to one speaker at the conference, the Freedom of Information Act was never intended to require turning all records over to everyone, as some contend. However, freedom of information, open records, and other policies are subject to interpretation. Many, including software manufacturers, insist that GIS and all governmental data should be open to access as a "public good." Others, noting that even the software manufacturers do not allow open access to the products they develop, support cost recovery. If the laws are interpreted strictly in a case that was still in process at the time of the conference, copyrighting of GIS products may no longer be allowed. This would undermine any cost recovery efforts. One speaker, however, stressed that the real issue is cost containment rather than cost recovery.

A closely related issue is that of privacy. In the United States, privacy is generally regarded as a right, to be highly esteemed and rigorously protected. In other nations, people are unaccustomed to such thinking and assign much less importance to the concept. Some suggest that the U.S. consider whether it is really necessary to be so concerned about privacy. Others point out potential dangers of playing down the issue. One paper distributed during the conference focused on the potential for misuse of data for sinister purposes. The paper pointed out that, with improved resolution, data can be used to exploit natural resources, like rain forests, or to track the movement of troops and artillery in warfare. The U.S. does not currently have much government control in this area. There are, however, systems in place elsewhere that could serve as models. Among them is England's privacy board.

There appears to be greater consensus on the topic of liability. Attendees at the conference were cautioned that information may be treated as a product and that disclaimers do not protect you from liability. Even if you have made the intended use(s) very clear, you can be listed in a lawsuit if someone chooses to misuse data that you have developed. You can also be held liable for any perceived representation of completeness and accuracy of data from others.

Those interested in obtaining documentation were advised that the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA), which hosted the conference, might produce a technical report and/or proceedings later if enough funds are available. As an alternate approach, Gene Trobia suggested that there may be one complete set of handouts among those who attended from AGIC. In response to a question from Steve Wing, Lynn Larson clarified that the last half day was devoted to special sessions for NCGIA members. Gene Trobia further explained that, in the absence of standards, the NCGIA used the conference to help determine how to handle legal issues for GIS. Noting that many decisions are being made on a state-by-state basis and that Arizona has no body of law yet dealing with GIS, Michael Collins added that it might be a good idea for AGIC to start providing input and suggestions to the State Legislature before key issues are decided at some other level. The task would entail reviewing everything that has transpired so far and what can/should be done, but Mr. Collins encouraged the Board to act soon to ensure a coordinated, statewide approach. Lynn Larson confirmed that there is some money in the budget that could be used for this purpose.

MISCELLANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS - Chris English presented a membership certificate to Dwight Curtiss, who was recently appointed to represent the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (now known as the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service or the NRCS).

Mr. English also presented a plaque to Seth Franzman, thanking him for his service to AGIC as President of the Board during the past year. Mr. Franzman responded that it was a pleasant and honorable task and thanked those who had supported him in carrying out the assignment.

Sally Lanier offered extra GIS/LIS commemorative calendars for any Council members who needed them.

Dale Steele reported that, in a meeting the previous day, the ASBGHN approved (1) switching the names for Pothole Canyon and North Fork Canyon and (2) changing names on the Hopi reservation to their Hopi form. He said the revised names were almost ready to be forwarded to the federal board. Cultural sensitivity toward Native Americans has increased. The ASBGHN is now trying to decide whether to allow certain sites on the reservation to be unlisted or specially marked.

Dwight Curtiss announced that the NRCS has no funds to digitize Hydrologic Unit Code boundaries. He invited anyone interested in providing manpower and/or money to call (602) 280-8838. He said more details would be available later.

CALL TO PUBLIC - Chris English extended a special welcome to Lynda Bellissime, who intends to put the entire Arizona satellite imagery set on computer. Ms. Bellissime confirmed that resources are available for this purpose and indicated that she is willing to share her data.

NEXT MEETING - Mr. English announced that the next Executive Management Board meeting would take place on Thursday,

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January 5 and that details would be provided later. *[The January meeting is scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. in the basement auditorium at 1616 W. Adams Street, Phoenix.]* The November Board meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.